

Investing in People

LIFELONG SUPPORT FOR BETTER FUTURES

Section Summaries and Recommendations

Early Education

Investments in early childhood education yield enormous intellectual, psychosocial, and economic returns throughout an individual's lifetime, increasing productivity and the nation's economic growth. Because enrolling every young child in preschool is critical to fostering their opportunities and expanding our national economic potential, the Committee recommends significant expansion of public investment in children.

Summary of Select Committee Recommendations:

- **Increase federal funding for early childhood education.**

Lifelong Learning

Education and training can no longer be confined to the first 18, 22, or 25 years of life. Higher education and advanced credentials are generally routes to better-paying, more secure jobs, but continual ongoing education, training, and re-training are increasingly necessary, as many workers end up having to find new jobs that demand new knowledge and skills.

It is imperative that we improve, expand, and better coordinate educational and training opportunities. Although states, localities, and the private sector have significant roles to play, Congress should invest more in each part of America's post-secondary and workforce development ecosystem. These include initiatives with a proven track record, whether or not they rely on traditional credentialing and promising new programs.

Summary of Select Committee Recommendations:

- **Provide free community college and fund programs that assist students with child care and transportation needs.**
- **Expand Pell Grant eligibility.**
- **Increase federal investment in career and technical education and apprenticeship programs.**
- **Strengthen the public workforce development system.**

Caregiving

Caring for young children, elderly relatives, or others with special needs are responsibilities that most Americans assume at different points in their lives, but these should neither be unaffordable nor create irreconcilable conflicts with people's abilities to hold down jobs and earn their livings. The high cost of paying for caregivers or sacrificing pay to provide care — a task that disproportionately falls to women — causes economic and psychological hardship for lower- and middle-income households. This hinders individual opportunities for economic and career advancement and, hence, economic growth. In addition, care workers are generally underpaid and have little job security, resulting in shortages of these workers at a time when demand for their services is increasing.

The Committee therefore urges Congress to ensure that affordable and high-quality child care and elder care are available for every American family that needs it. We also believe that workers should be able to take limited paid leave to care for young children and respond to family health crises throughout the lifecycle.

Summary of Select Committee Recommendations:

- **Provide federal subsidies for child care.**
- **Establish a national standard for paid family leave.**

Small Businesses

Increased entrepreneurship can provide a way to tackle the country's dramatic wealth gap and secure an economic future for the next generation. Yet many entrepreneurs and small business owners, particularly people of color and those living in rural areas, face barriers that prevent them from reaching their full competitive and economic potential. Many others with good ideas for businesses that could serve community needs and create jobs are unable to launch a new business because they cannot raise the capital.

The federal government should level the playing field by expanding access to capital, increasing support for and improving the quality of technical assistance, easing administrative burdens, and collecting more granular and timely data on small businesses and federal program performance. These efforts should be targeted to those facing barriers because of their economic status, geography, race, or gender.

Summary of Select Committee Recommendations:

- **Update and expand existing Small Business Administration programs.**
- **Scale federal support for Community and Mission Lenders.**
- **Enhance technical assistance programs for small businesses, especially underserved and rural businesses.**
- **Ease administrative burdens for new entrepreneurs.**
- **Collect and publish more granular data on small business lending and investments.**